

COUNCIL EXPENDITURE POLICY DELIBERATIONS

Recommendation

The City Clerk and the Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer recommend:

1. That this report and the accompanying presentation be received for information.

Contribution to Sustainability

Council is responsible for overall governance and policy making, which directly influences the financial and operational sustainability of the municipality.

Economic Impact

There is no direct economic impact from this report.

Communications Plan

Meetings of the Task Force are open to the public and appear on Council's calendar of meetings posted to the City's web site.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is:

- to present the results of a survey of the Council Offices on the type of paid advertisements typically made;
- to facilitate the Task Force's consideration of expense policy matters relating to Community Events and Sponsorships, and General Office Expenses; and
- to summarize the recommendations made by the Task Force to date.

Background - Analysis and Options

To date the substantive work of the Task Force has focused on Council's expense policy. At the April 13, 2016 meeting of the Task Force discussion centred on advertising and other direct-to-public communication expenses; at its June 10 meeting the Task Force is expected to discuss both Community Events and Sponsorship Expenses, as well as General Office Expenses in addition to any follow-up discussion to be had with respect to advertising expenses.

Once its work is complete the Task Force will apply its findings and recommendations on the Council expense policy to the implications of those changes on the Council Code of Conduct, and will also entertain more general changes to the Council Code of Conduct.

The conclusions and recommendations made by the Task Force to date are set out at Attachment 1.

Paid Advertising Survey

On April 13, 2016 the Council Offices were surveyed on the types of paid advertisements they typically place. Information was sought on ads ranging from 'business card' placements to more elaborate forms of paid advertising, including through social media.

The overall indication from the survey is that very little paid advertising is made by Council Offices. The only reported activity involved:

- Hard copy newsletters distributed once or twice per year;
- Joint Passover greetings shared between two Council Offices;
- Small giveaways at an annual summer event (bags, magnets) with contact information imprinted;
- Rosh Hashanah greetings in a synagogue calendar;
- Passover Greetings in a magazine;
- Chanukah greetings in a City Playhouse programme;
- Mobile signage;
- Paid 'boosts' to social media postings.

Relationship to Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018)

This report supports the goals established by Council in the Term of Council Service Excellence Strategy Map (2014-2018), particularly those relating to the Corporate Governance and Accountability Framework

Regional Implications

There are no regional implications from this report.

Conclusion

This report supports the continuing deliberations of the Council Expenditure and Code of Conduct Review Task Force.

Attachments

1. Up to date listing of substantive Task Force recommendations

Report prepared by:

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City Clerk

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey A. Abrams
City Clerk

Laura Mirabella-Siddall
Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer

Substantive Recommendations To Date

Consolidated formal recommendations:

The following recommendations have been made by the Task Force to date (subject to consolidation into the Council Expenditure and Code of Conduct Review Task Force Findings Report):

1. That consideration be given to establishing a requirement that the source of funding be identified in any advertisements placed by the Mayor and Members of Council in on-line publications, or larger than a quarter page ad (5 inches by 5 inches) in printed form;
2. That in an election year, paid advertisements or corporate newsletters (including e-newsletters) after the cut-off date be directly related to city business such as communicating with respect to a pending Planning Act application or development matter, the facilitation of a community meeting, the opening of a city facility, and community consultations relating to a matter to be considered by Council before the end of the term. Publications shall not be placed to issue greetings on behalf of a councillor or merely to provide contact information.

Consolidated recommendations made by consensus:

The following recommendations have been made by consensus and are subject to formal approval and consolidation into the Council Expenditure and Code of Conduct Review Task Force Findings Report:

- a) Business card publications should be permitted; however care should be taken to avoid multiple business cards from different Council Offices in one publication. In those cases a corporate ad should be placed instead;
- b) If a corporate greeting is placed, no individual ads (or business cards) should be permitted, particularly for holiday greetings;
- c) As a principle, the manner of advertising chosen should be made on the principle of reaching the most residents for the lowest cost;
- d) Congratulatory letters (provided they are at no cost) should not be subject to the restrictions in the expense policy regarding paid advertising;
- e) 'On-line publications' should be added to the list of media eligible for paid postings;
- f) The election year advertising cut-off date should be established once amendments to the *Municipal Elections Act* are approved;
- g) The \$2000/4000 (Council Member/Mayor) limit for advertisements in 'charitable' publications should be maintained, but there should be no maximum otherwise so long as the advertising expense is within budget.

Pending recommendations:

The following issues, amongst others, have been raised by the Task Force but are at this point in time are unresolved:

- The treatment to be given to car wraps
- Whether the use of sponsorship money or personal funds should be subject to the conditions set out in the expense policy, and if used, how to make those activities transparent.